



"INDEPENDENT IN ALL THINGS. NEUTRAL IN NONE."

VOLUME XVI.

CHICAGO, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1897—TWELVE PAGES

NUMBER 414.

THE THIEVES MUST GO DOWN!

Tax Fixing as a Fine Art Must Cease in the City of Chicago.

The Men Who Have Their Property Left Off the Lists Are Trembling.

Tax Dodgers May Squirm, but the People Are Aroused and Must Be Appeased.

One of the Biggest Business Blocks in Northwest Chicago Untaxed Last Year.

One of the largest business blocks in Northwest Chicago was left entirely off the tax list. In the vault of the Taxpayers' Defense League are documents relating to tax "fixing" and tax "fixers" and their patrons. President Holbrook claims these, with the assistance of witnesses who will be called, will be sufficient evidence to justify the September grand jury in indicting some leading corporation attorneys, business men and "go-betweens" on the charge of conspiracy to defraud the county.

office of a leading Board of Trade operator and packer. He will be called before the jury. It is claimed that this man has acted as a "tax adjuster" for some years. An effort will be made also, it is said, to get one of the active members of a real estate firm controlling several large office buildings to tell the result of an interview he had with Assessor Gunning some weeks ago. It is claimed that this real estate man has made no secret of what he asserts was a proposition on the part of the assessor to "fix" the taxes of the office buildings if the proper "arguments" were used.

During the last month over 100 cases of proposed or completed "tax fixing" or scaling of assessments have been reported to the league. In many of these cases the names are known of the "go-betweens" who, it is alleged, approached property owners and claimed to be able to reduce their assessments for a compensation. A number of the tax "fixers" are also known by name, who, it is claimed, were paid money to secure reductions of south town assessments and whose clients were assessed at an absurdly low rate.

In speaking of the matter Wednesday President Holbrook said: "The presence and active labors of go-betweens have been known to the property-owning public for years, and now a number of firms are willing to help us before the Grand Jury. It is on their testimony we hope to punish the conspirators against the county according to their crimes."

One of these persons whom the grand jury will be asked to investigate is an attorney who is a graduate of Yale University. The league claims to have a witness who will swear that this attorney met him opposite the Commercial National Bank one afternoon recently and asked him if he wanted his assessment "fixed." It is said the witness will further testify that the attorney then told him that he had made "a pot of money" for himself and Gunning fixing the assessment of over fifty Yale graduates who were large property owners in the South town. The witness, it is asserted, will also swear that the attorney plainly said that for a stated sum he would get Gunning to reduce the assessment of the witness' south town property, and then informed the witness that he must call the following Monday to "fix the matter up," as the attorney was going to leave town for a vacation.

A petition has been brought to the attention of the Finance Committee of the County Board alleging that the assessments on three pieces of downtown property are too low. The property occupied by A. M. Rothschild & Co.'s department store is affected. The complainant is John A. Bell, agent for Jonathan Clark, owner of 120 feet of the property, which is assessed at \$68,000. The contention is that if \$98,000 is an equitable assessment on this 120 feet the assessments on the rest of the area occupied by the department store are too low. The instances cited are the first eighty feet, owned by H. Keep and A. Keep, and assessed at \$37,000; eighty feet held by the Northern Trust Company as trustee and assessed at \$40,020, and the corner of Van Buren and State streets, owned by H. G. Foreman, and assessed at \$48,100.

In another case one of the largest corporations operating in the county is implicated. It is claimed that evidence will be brought before the grand jury which will show that the attorney of this corporation, whose interests spread all over the world, actually paid a "go-between" several thousand dollars to have Assessor Gunning and another assessor reduce the company's assessments. It is claimed that this "go-between" who is a livery man, with the money so obtained during the past two years has built an expensive stable.

Chairman Allen has found that the eighty feet owned by H. Keep was assessed 5 47-64 per cent., the eighty feet owned by the Northern Trust Company at 5 5-7 per cent., the piece at the corner of Van Buren and State streets at 5 9-88 per cent., the property of Complainant Clark at 9 29-54 per cent. of the Swift commission valuation.

Evidence will be shown the jury, it is said, that one of the members of a prominent Jackson street firm himself paid a south town assessor a sum of money to reduce the firm's assessment to a reasonable rate. The man who claims to have submitted to this levy from the assessor is said to explain that his company was assessed at an absurdly high figure, and had to use money in self-defense.

Taking the stand that he is dealing with a professional tax dodger, a strong and caustic letter has been addressed to George M. Pullman by Z. S. Holbrook, president of the Taxpayers' Defense League.

A manufacturing firm's senior member is reported to have told Chairman Allen of the County Board Finance Committee in confidence that a West Town assessor visited him at the company's office and offered to "fix the assessment to suit" for the sum of \$1,200. He will be asked to appear before the Grand Jury to give testimony. Evidence will be shown the jury implicating the nephew of a former member of Congress from Chicago in attempts to blackmail certain South Town firms into paying him to have their assessments reduced. A free-lance barber who visits the houses of prominent bankers and there shaves the magnates has his headquarters in the downtown

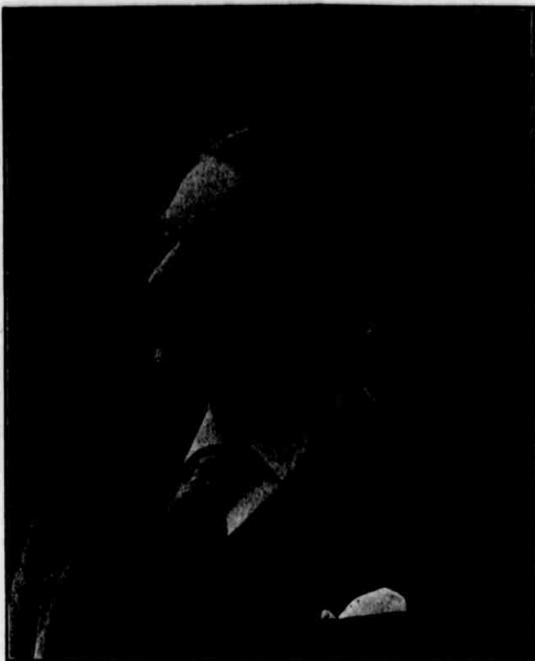
Mr. Holbrook has opened the vials of his wrath and poured the contents over the multi-millionaire in a merciless flood. He has compared the palace car magnate to the anarchist in the slums; has referred to his class as a menace to the land; a host of genteel criminals; beggars who ply their calling at the front doors of those before whom they stoop to ask a sordid blessing.

The occasion of the open letter is the figures at which the millions of property owned by the Pullman Palace Car Company have been assessed.

Instead of \$3,000,003, which the president of the league declares should be the valuation placed upon the company's assets, according to the corporation's own estimates, the aggregate assessments amount to \$1,561,955. Land estimated by the league to be worth \$40,000 an acre is assessed at \$741, and other glaring discrepancies are pointed out in the exhaustive report of values and assessments which accompany the open letter.

The writer refers to the strike of 1894 and points out to Mr. Pullman the fact that at the cost of more money to the Government, State and city than they have ever or possibly will ever receive

from the Pullman Palace Car Company its property was protected during the strike. He asks what has Pullman done in return. The answer is forthcoming: "Some one has generously loaned to the assessor a smoked glass, through which to strain his virtuous eyes when he was estimating the value of your property." In conclusion the writer says: "It is cruel, it is dishonest, it is criminal to let the humble taxpayers, who seldom ask for protection, bear the heavy burdens they are now carrying, while some rich corporations shirk their duty and escape by methods that demand the attention of the grand jury."



HON. RALPH M. EASLEY, Secretary of the Civic Federation of Chicago.

badly off if it needs as a leader this cheap chaw, who never stood up for a friend.

Alderman Barry, the sailor of the Council, is also said to be the best-natured man in the body.

Alderman Bennett's proposed tax on baby carriages ought to be defeated.

Bennet and Alwart, the twin demons of the Council, are always in demand at roll calls.

Alderman Gazzolo is preparing an article on what he knows about checks. The Eagle is in a position to say that he knows a great deal.

Dewdle & Chamberlain is the name of one of the very best contracting firms in the country. They have a very low bid in for the five years' garbage work, considering the known financial backing and strength of the firm.

If you want to lose money invest in any of the Klondike schemes. They are all worked by sharpers.

The September edition of the Review of Reviews has a magnificent article on "Caucus Reform," from the pen of Hon. Ralph M. Easley, of the Civic Federation of Chicago.

Hon. D. W. Ackerman is not seeking any office, but his old-time friends propose to send him back to the City Council next spring from the Twenty-eighth Ward.

There are very few Democratic aspirants for Congress in the Sixth District.

Hon. A. W. Maltby could put up a great fight for Congress in the Sixth District.

If the Democrats of the Twelfth Ward nominate Rivers McNeill for Alderman he will poll a great vote.

There will be a grand swimming exhibition and contest for prizes at the Kadish Natatorium, 541 Wells street, on the night of Sept. 20.

Pat Morris still has his war paint on, and proposes to win the Aldermanic fight in the Nineteenth Ward next spring.

Both Mayor Harrison and Chief Kipley had some interesting things to say Wednesday regarding the attack made on the police department relative to the so-called "blind pigs" and gambling resorts in the prohibition district of the Thirty-fourth ward. It was charged in a certain morning paper that the places were operating under police protection and an alleged interview between Chief Kipley and Alderman Bennett was published.

Mayor Harrison said: "If there are

any such places operating under police protection the complainants have but to establish their statements as facts and the police officers will be immediately discharged. Such things don't go under this administration, and all that I require is proof of what the alderman from the Thirty-fourth ward charges."

Chief Kipley said: "The interview published was false and did me a great injustice. No such things as related were said by me or Alderman Bennett. When I do know you may be sure there will be neither gambling nor illicit liquor selling there, if there is anything of the kind there now."

City Collector Martin has taken out warrants for a number of delinquent real estate brokers who have not paid licenses. C. U. Gordon & Co., real estate brokers, 115 Dearborn street, are delinquent. Postmaster Gordon, however, declares that he has severed his connection with the firm.

Warrants have been taken out for the arrest of the following:

James R. May, 94 LaSalle street.

James G. Cozzens, 97 Washington street.

J. A. J. Lee, 100 Washington street.

C. A. Bellamy, 100 Washington street.

R. B. Bell, 100 Washington street.

C. F. Meyer, 100 Washington street.

W. S. Schrader, 100 Washington street.

J. S. Lemon, 120 Randolph street.

W. J. Ellingworth, 21 Quincy street.

Kenny & Standish, 108 Dearborn street.

A. C. Tisdell, 145 LaSalle street.

George C. Whipple & Co., 50 Dearborn street.

E. C. Hullin & Co., 108 Dearborn street.

The warrants will be served by agents of the city collector during the week.

The period for which the license fee is due began May 1.

The telegraph manual issued by the Western Electric Company will teach any one the art of telegraphy. To get a copy address Department 6 G, Western Electric Company, 242 South Jefferson street, Chicago, and inclose two-cent stamp.

REFORM BILLS ARE READY!

The Civic Federation Has Been Hard at Work on Them for Several Weeks Past.

There Is Some Doubt, However, About a Special Session Being Called This Year.

The Governor at Present Does Not Think That One Is at All Necessary.

Should He Change His Mind the General Assembly Will Reconvene in November.

A conference between officers of the Civic Federation, members of the County Board, and the Taxpayers' Defense League will soon be held to discuss the question of a special session of the Legislature for the purpose of passing a revenue bill. President Hoely and a majority of the County Board, also the league people, say they are anxious to have Gov. Tanner convene the General Assembly for this purpose. The federation people claim to be equally interested in this matter, but they also urge the necessity of a new primary election law, and now, since the irregularities in Chicago's assessments have been made so apparent, contend it is a measure that should go hand in hand with the desired revenue reform.

The labor clause and its opponents was precipitated by the report of Attorney Morrill, which was adverse to the board, declaring for union men as against non-union laborers. He said, however, the board might be justified upon occasion to adopt a union clause. Trustees Brennan, Gallagher, Keating and Sherwood led the fight for the union cause, and Trustees Pettibone, Strong, Mark and Cameron opposed it. The board also adopted without a dissenting vote the recommendation of the Judiciary Committee to fight the suit of the Civil Service Commission, which is seeking to bring the school matters under its control by a decision of the courts.

At the same time it is pointed out that the Governor and his advisers are deeply concerned in a reapportionment, Congressionally and Senatorially, of the State. So one of the arguments advanced is that these three things could be incorporated in the call for a special session.

"Nature smiles through sunbeams" is the trade mark of the Sunbeam Incandescent Lamp Company.

Whether the movement should take into consideration anything more than a revenue bill. It is said the Governor will not act unless he can have assurance that the anti-machine, or Madden faction, that prevented the passage of an apportionment bill at the regular session, withdraws its opposition and lets his redistricting of Cook County and the State go through.

"Wiring Tables; How They Are Made, and How to Use Them" is the title of a book recently published by Thos. G. Grier. While the book deals with a technical subject, it is written with a view of reaching every one interested in electrical work. Technical terms are avoided, and the language is clear to those not posted in electrical matters; 76 pages, 7x5 1/2 inches, bound in cloth; price, \$1. Edward R. Grier, 1436 Monadnock Building, Chicago.

At federation headquarters it is believed that the distribution of Federal appointments for Illinois will do much to withdraw this opposition. It is claimed that Jonathan Merriman, Clark J. Tisdell and W. G. Cochran, leaders of the anti-machine fight at Springfield, are all to be supplied with plums from Washington.

The Board of Education has finally locked horns with organized labor. The interests of a few thousand children kept out of school are not considered.

On the supposition that these appointments will be made the federation people think all obstacles to a special session at which a reapportionment of the State can be put through will disappear. They recognize, however, that both the Cook County machines will set up a stiff objection to any primary election law being enacted at a special session. The proposed conference, therefore, will be held to determine just what course to pursue.

Rabbit-Ear Wheeler's Chicago City Railway Company is defendant in a bill for injunction filed in the United States Court. Elbert R. Robinson, an inventor, is the complainant, and he alleges that the street railway company is using 6,500 wheels in its rolling stock which are manufactured according to a pattern upon which he has applied for a patent and which he invented. Pending the issuance of the patent he asks for an injunction restraining the railway company from manufacturing more of the wheels.

The federation has its petitions to the Governor in circulation, and Secretary Easley said they were being signed by a large number of voters.

George E. Adams intimates that he will not accept a Congressional nomination to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Mr. Cooke. Is not Mr. Adams premature? He has not been officially informed of the death of Mr. Cooke, and the great Governor of Illinois, the commander-in-chief of Backer, having been told that a vacancy does exist in this Congressional district and asked to state when he proposed to call a special election, promptly asserted that he had no information of the death of Mr. Cooke and no intention in the absence of such authentic information to call an official election.

Bids for substructures on four new bridges on the drainage canal held the drainage commissioners in a two hours' session Wednesday afternoon. The proposed structures are to be swing bridges, one on the Chicago and Calumet Terminal Railway, one on the Chicago, Madison and Northern, two for the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. Sixteen bids were opened and read. The bids were referred to the engineering committee.

The great panjandrum of Illinois knows very little, it is true, but he might have known, even officially, that a vacancy existed in that particular Congressional district, for it is his duty to take cognizance of certain notorious facts, just as it is the duty of a Judge to declare without hearing evidence on the point that the day is day, that night is night, Thursday is Thursday, or any other generally known and undisputed fact.

No action was taken in regard to river improvement. Mayor Harrison and Commissioner of Public Works McGann expect to leave Saturday for a two weeks' tour of the large Eastern cities to inspect garbage crematories.

Narrow minds, however, are always technical. They do not know officially that which they know as a matter of course, and they hem and haw and set up little obstacles that in their opinion are great constitutional impediments to action that should be as matter of course.

After two hours of wrangling over the union labor problem on Wednesday night the School Board concluded not to go on record for the present and appointed a committee of five to see if there was not some way to arbitrate the strike on school buildings. Trustees Gallagher, Pettibone, Keating, Mark and Harris were named and were instructed to report back to the board without taking any definite action.

It is the duty of the Governor to call an election in order that the district may be represented in Congress at the December session. He has not yet